

Parliament vol 4.

THE
S P E E C H
OF

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Sir Simon Harcourt,

IN THE
Honourable House of COMMONS,
The Last Sessions of PARLIAMENT.

W HATEVER the Determination of this House may be, this I am sure of ; and it must be admitted, that I am as duly elected for the Burrough of *Abinton*, as ever any Man was.

Had it been the Pleasure of this House to have constru'd the Charret under which this Election is made, according to the Natural and Plain Words of it, as the Inhabitants have always understood it. — In such a Sence, as former Parliaments have frequently expounded it. — Had you declared the Right of Election, to be in those Persons who have, without any Interruptions, exercis'd it for a Hundred and fifty Years, you would not have heard insisted, That I had not the Majority. — Even as you have determined the Right, my Majority is still unquestionable.

No Gentleman with Reason can disprove my Assertion ; whatever Reason he may have to refuse me his Vote.

You have been truly inform'd, the Petitioner, on closing the Poll, declar'd, and in open Court, He was satisfy'd he had lost the Election, and that he did not come thither, with any Prospect or Hopes of Success.

So stupid then was I, as not to comprehend the Meaning of those Words ; *I would do him Justice* ; I really believe he himself was not, at that time, let into the Secret.

Any Opposition may give a Handle to a Petition, no matter for the Justice of it, Power will maintain it.

Whoever sent him on such an Errand ; What mean and contemptible Notions must he entertain of the then ensuing Parliament ? He must suppose them capable of the basest Action, of being aw'd or influenc'd by Menaces or Promises ; and to prostitute their Consciences at the Word of Command.

Had there been such a Parliament elected, and I declared not duly elected, I should then have left my Place, with a Compassion for the few Unfortunate Friends that staid behind me ; whoever could have framed such a Project to himself, must undoubtedly have wish'd for, perhaps have wanted, such a Parliament.

He must ha' be'n a Person, the most abandon'd Wretch in the World, who had long quitted all Notions of Rights and Wrong, all Sence of Truth and Justice, of Honour and Conscience.

Whatever his dark Purposes were, 'tis our Happiness, and the Nation's, that they were entirely disappointed in the Choice of this Parliament.

I cannot directly point him out, but whoever he was, I have so much Charity, as sincerely to wish, he may feel, and be truly sensible of the Honour and Impartial Justice of a *British* Parliament.

Here he summ'd up the Poll on both sides, and demonstrated, that the Council for the Petition had left him the Majority of Two Votes, and he added several unquestionable Votes to his own Poll.

The Petition charges me personally with many indirect Practices ; but no Attempt has been made to prove any thing of that kind.

As for the indirect Practices charged on my Agents ; I had no Agents ; I knew of no Opposition till the Morning of the Election, nor had the least Apprehension of any. I thought no Agent necessary to promote my Interest ; nor had I employ'd any Person whatsoever, to solicit for me : But what Solicitations, what Menaces and Promises have been used against me, and by whom, are but too well known to too many.

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